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THE STORY OF HOSEA'S MARRIAGE.

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We do not have the whole story of Hosea's family life in his own words, for chap. 1 is not told by himself, but by someone else, probably one of his disciples; for, as chap. 3 shows, he himself told the story in the first person: "Jahve said to *me*," etc.; not "Jahve said to *Hosea*." It is not likely that he would tell part of the story in the first and part in the third person.

There is, however, no doubt that the story in chap. 1 is authentic; *i. e.*, that it goes back to Hosea himself, as far as the facts related in it are concerned—the facts of his marriage, the name of his wife, the strange names of his three children and their significance, and the part Jahve plays in every one of them. Only vs. 2*b* is somewhat different from the rest of the chapter. The explanatory clause in vs. 2 reads: "for the land commits great whoredom, departing from *Jahve*." In the other explanations of the names Jahve speaks in the first person (see vss. 4, 5, 6, 9); they must therefore go back directly to Hosea. We naturally expect in vs. 2 also that Jahve should say: "for the land commits great whoredom departing from *me*," not "from *Jahve*." This explanation in vs. 2*b* appears therefore not to be original with Hosea, but to be due to an editor or reader.

But this clause in vs. 2*b* is very closely connected with 2*a*. We expect some such explanation for vs. 2*a*. If Hosea did not give it, as we have just been led to conclude, what can have been the reason for the omission? Plainly this: that he did not report in his own story the saying of Jahve as, "Go, take thee a wife of whoredom," but simply, "Go, take thee a wife" אִשָּׁה. The first would have needed an explanation, such as we now have in vs. 2*b*; the second, not. He does not receive the command to marry a harlot, but simply to marry a wife. In regard to the clause "and children of whoredom," it has long been noticed that it is, to say the least, very strange, and it is very precarious to regard it as original by assuming that "and *get* children of whoredom" is to be understood. So this phrase has rightly been regarded as a gloss before.

All this is, of course, essentially in harmony with the prevailing view of those who regard the chapter as the record of a real experience and not as an allegory; who see in it the outcome, not the beginning, of Hosea's experience. Hosea married a pure woman, without knowing that she would prove unfaithful. But, looking back on his whole life, he understood that it was all providential, that his marriage with just such a woman had been intended by Jahve. The only difference in the view just presented is the answer given to the question whether Hosea would have expressed this conviction in the manner in which it is now recorded in the text. To me it seems more probable that he did not, and the indications pointed out above, slight as they must be in the nature of the case, are sufficient to regard vs. 2b as an addition which is not original with Hosea.

In this connection it is significant to note that the later Hebrew has a use of the verb גִּמַּר, meaning "to gratify the sexual appetite."¹ This is clearly a denominative, meaning to behave Gomer-like. It appears then very plausible to regard "wife of whoredoms" as a marginal gloss by a reader who meant to explain the name Gomer. When this had once crept into the text, it was easy and natural for another reader to add from 2:6 "and children of whoredoms."²

After 1:9 the narrative of Hosea's life breaks off, and we do not have the continuation till we come to chap. 3; for chap. 2 has to do with the relation of Jahve and Israel. Significantly enough Hosea tells the story here in the first person. This shows plainly that he must have told the whole story in the first person; for it is hardly likely, as was said above, that he would tell the story partly in the first and partly in the third person,³ and, moreover,

¹ Dr. Ginsberg of the Jewish Seminary called my attention to this.

² It would not be strange if some adherent of the allegorical interpretation would seize on this and point out that this explanation of the name of Gomer would clearly indicate that the story must not be taken literally, since every name, Gomer included, is an allegorical name. But that would be a rash conclusion, for the verb גִּמַּר does not have this meaning in classical Hebrew. Its use in later Hebrew in this sense is to be taken, as was said above, as a denominative form from Gomer. It was the notorious behavior of this woman that caused people to say in a similar case "they act Gomer-like." This meaning is therefore not inherent in the root, but the result of Gomer's action. That the name did originally not mean "harlot" is certain; that is merely the opinion of the glossator.

³ Professor F. Brown calls my attention to an article by Professor Budde to appear in *ZAW.*, XXVI (1906), pp. 1 sqq., on "Zum Text der drei letzten kleinen Propheten," in which Professor Budde expresses quite incidentally (*Sonderabdruck*, v. 7) the view that the first person should be restored throughout in chap. 1 for the third (referring to the prophet). He cites this as illustrating his general theory that there was a redactional tendency to change *Selbstbericht* into *Fremdbericht*. He assumes therefore also that Hosea must have told the whole story himself in the first person. His position is not essentially different from the one expressed above; it only goes a step further in the explanation of the third

there is really no argument, as Dr. Harper well observes, that is convincing for regarding chap. 3 as a later addition; surely an interpolator would hardly have dared to write such a chapter in such a way.

Now, chap. 3 presupposes Hosea's discovery of the faithlessness of his wife. No record remains telling when he made the terrible discovery. Different hypotheses have been advanced, but it appears most plausible that he discovered it after the birth of his three children; for, as has been well observed, it would hardly be possible to think of Hosea as still living with Gomer as his wife and begetting children with her after he knew that she was unfaithful. That would be contrary to all Israelitish custom. And it is certainly not justifiable to press the meaning of the names of the second and third children so as to extract from them the meaning that Hosea knew at the time of the birth of his second child, or even of his third, that his wife was unfaithful and that the children were not his. The direct and definite reasons given in chap. 1 why he called them by just these names and by no others contradict it. The name of the boy, Lo-'Ammi, does not indicate that he who gives the name, and thereby, according to ancient ideas, recognizes them as his own, says "Not my *kin*,"⁴ and in saying so rejects it. Isaiah's boy was called Hurry-booty-speedy-prey, not because he was so quick at the prey, but to express to the people a great lesson: the Assyrians will come quickly and take speedily the prey. So here the reason for the name is not that the boy is not his own son, but that the boy's name should be a symbol of Israel: "for ye are not my people."

The discovery of Gomer's unfaithfulness lies therefore between chap. 1 and chap. 3; for chap. 3 assumes it, and chap. 1 gives no hint that Hosea knows anything of it till after the birth of his three children.

person in chap. 3. The results arrived at above in regard to 1:2*b*, and later in regard to 3:2, are not invalidated by Professor Budde's theory. It simplifies the point made above, that the story in chap. 1, though not given in Hosea's own words, goes back to Hosea himself, as far as the facts related in it are concerned; for it restores Hosea's own words simply by changing the third person into the first.

⁴It is said that לֹא-עַמִּי is to be translated "not my *kin*;" *i. e.*, "not my son." But in the corresponding explanation in vs. 9*b*, "for ye are not my people," it is to be translated "my *people*." And the significance of the name for the people must be that it will perpetually recall to them Jahve's message through Hosea. If they asked why Hosea called his son Lo-'Ammi, the answer must always have been, because he believes that Jahve calls Israel Lo-'Ammi. He certainly did not mean that the answer should, or even might, be because the boy is a bastard. That would have spoiled the symbolic significance for the people. Moreover the linguistic question also comes up: Is עַמִּי really equivalent to בֶּן-עַמִּי (*cf.* Gen. 19:38)? The latter means "not my kinsman;" does the former also?

That we have in chap. 3 the same woman as in chap. 1 is the only reasonable position. Hosea is commanded to love the woman *still* (עַד does not mean here "again," but "still"), in spite of her awful sin—an unheard-of command in Israel, where adulteresses were put to death. Notice that he is to *love* her still, not to marry her, which shows that she is the same woman. This is different from chap. 1, where he is commanded to take, to marry, a wife. The fact that a divine command had to be given to Hosea shows that he was conscious that he would never have done this of himself; in fact, that he had intended to do something entirely different with Gomer. His marriage relation is to become, as he now learns, in a much deeper sense than he had ever thought, the symbol of the relation of Jahve and Israel. It becomes clear to him that Jahve is in an entirely similar position with Israel. Israel is his wife, and she also is unfaithful. Hosea could not but believe that Jahve would cast her off; in fact, he had proclaimed this message for years, as the names of his children show: Jahve is utterly righteous; he cannot tolerate such terrible infidelity as Israel shows; he must punish her; he must cast her away and have nothing to do with her any more. Hosea is a prophet of doom!

But now comes the unheard-of message: Jahve loves Israel still; he cannot bear to cast her off forever. And Hosea is to symbolize in his life, hard as it may be, this deathless love in spite of cruel unfaithfulness: love Gomer still, for Jahve loves Israel still in spite of her sin! The love of God is to become incarnate in Hosea.

It has been claimed above that the only reasonable position is to regard the woman in chaps. 1 and 3 as the same, *i. e.* Gomer. But it is pointed out that Jahve does not say "*this* woman," but simply "*a* woman," and it is asked how this woman is connected with the one in chap. 1. It is to be observed that the whole stress in this verse, 3:1, lies on "love," and on "still." Notice the emphatic position of עַד! It is not said, "*take* (marry) a woman," but, "*still love* a woman;" a woman, therefore, whom you have loved before. Go on loving her, even though she be such a one as "loves another and is an adulteress"!⁵ The love is not something new; he is to love her still; the new element is the kind of woman that he must love even now that he knows

⁵ We must punctuate following the LXX ἀγαπῶσαν אִשָּׁה. Marti.

that she is an adulteress. And thus quite naturally it was more necessary to emphasize the kind of a woman he is to love, such a one as loves another and is an adulteress, than to emphasize that it is Gomer whom he must still love by saying "*this* woman;" for we are not led to suppose by anything whatsoever that he had *loved*, before this command in 3:1 comes, another woman whom he is to go on loving; it is the same Gomer whom he had loved, and yet not the same kind of woman, for she is an adulteress. The "love" and the "still" are thus the connecting link between chaps. 1 and 3.⁶

Verse 2 tells us that Hosea bought her for a certain price, and some uncertain conclusions have been drawn from this: *e. g.*, that Hosea had cast her off, and that she had fallen into the hands of a slaveholder, whose concubine she had become. All this is unfounded. The real solution of the difficulty created by this verse seems to me to be in line with the observation made above, that we have here Hosea himself telling the story in the first person, in which he must have told the whole of it. This verse appears to me to belong to the beginning of the story, which we have from another now in chap. 1. It told how Hosea executed Jahve's original command to take a wife, how he went and acquired Gomer for his wife by giving as the marriage settlement fifteen shekels of silver and one and a half homer of barley.⁷ It must therefore have stood in Hosea's own story after the command in 1:2.⁸

It has been noticed that we are not told to whom vss. 4 *sq.* of chap. 3 are addressed; for, as the text now stands, vs. 3 is spoken by Hosea to Gomer. But the verses are clearly part of the divine message to Hosea. They explain to him why he should treat his wife in this fashion. If this is so—and how it can be otherwise is not easy to see—the analogy of 3:1, as well as of

⁶ All this furnishes an additional argument for regarding 1:2b as not original.

⁷ That he paid part in coin and part in kind may indicate that Hosea was poor, so that even this may have been a large sum for him. He mentions it because he wishes to show that Gomer was procured in the ordinary way, and that she became his legitimate wife by the payment of the *mohar*. Commentators have figured out that the whole amount would be equivalent to thirty shekels of silver, and have expressed surprise that Hosea should have paid for her only as much as is paid for a slave (Exod. 21:32). But it is interesting to notice that we have a striking parallel to this in the Code of Hammurabi. In § 252, which corresponds exactly to Exod. 21:32, the price for a slave is fixed at one-third of a mana of silver. In § 139 the *tirbatu*, or marriage settlement (= *mohar*), is legally fixed at one mana of silver, but in § 140 it is declared to be only one-third of a mana of silver for a *muškenu*, *i. e.*, for one of the poorer classes. In other words, for a *muškenu* the amount of the *mohar* is the same as the price for a slave. Exactly as we find it in Hosea's case.

⁸ If Professor Budde's theory is adopted, it would naturally find its place after 1:3a.

1:4, 6, 9, shows that vs. 3 must really also be part of Jahve's command; for Jahve explains here and gives reasons for the behavior of Hosea toward the woman, as it is described in vs. 3.⁹ We must therefore read, without changing the consonantal text at all, "*and say* (imperative!) unto her" The Massorites punctuated "and I said" because of vs. 2. But vs. 2 is not in its original place here, for which assertion this point is an additional argument.

Jahve then tells Hosea in vs. 3 that he is to speak earnestly to Gomer, telling her that he will keep her in confinement so that she will have no chance to see her paramour, but that he will still be her own. The **וְגַם־אֲנִי** does not mean "and I also," but the **גַּם** makes the **אֲנִי** emphatic, thus giving it an affirmative or even adversative meaning (*cf.*, *e. g.*, Mal. 2:9), which it has especially after a preceding negative (*cf.*, *e. g.*, 2 Sam. 12:13, 14). Ewald's "*gleichwohl bleibe ich dir gut*" is therefore the real interpretation. The text is quite correct and must not be changed. The "yet I, on my part am thine" corresponds to the "love" in vs. 1. If this were not the real interpretation, the command to love her still, which is the great point in vs. 1, would find no expression in Hosea's words to Gomer.

The story breaks off here. We are not told what Hosea did. But there can be no doubt that he obeyed the divine command. His book makes it clear that he also tried, just as earnestly as Jahve, to woo back the love of his erring wife. It is really in the nature of the purpose of his book that we are not told with what success, for his experience has become symbolic of Jahve's experience. The prophet of doom has become the prophet of love, ever hoping for the return of love. He does not think it will be possible without taking the wife (Israel) away from the influence of the terrible temptation (3:4, 5); that must be done, for then will be Jahve's great opportunity of winning back Israel's love; then will Israel come to know Jahve and his love and grace.

⁹ Every time that Hosea is commanded to do something strange we have the reason for it immediately following: in 1:4, why he should call his first-born Jezreel; in 1:6, why he should call his daughter Lo-Ruhamah; in 1:9, why his third child Lo-'Ammi; in 3:1, why he should still love such a woman. Now, 3:4, 5 read exactly like one of these explanations that Jahve gives to Hosea, and since they correspond so closely to vs. 3, we must regard vs. 3 as giving Jahve's order telling what Hosea should do with such a woman, for which treatment the reason is supplied in vss. 4 and 5, which is ever the same: Jahve does so, too! Jahve's actions and Hosea's are to correspond. Now, all these explanations begin with **כִּי** "for," with the exception of 3:1, which reads **כִּי־אֶהְבֶּתָּ יְהוָה**. But this must originally have read **יְהוָה אֶהְבֶּתָּ כִּי**, "for I love." The final **י** was regarded as an abbreviation for **יְהוָה**, and consequently the **כ** was joined to **אֶהְבֶּתָּ**.

The story of Hosea's family life is thus preserved to us only in a fragmentary form in chaps. 1 and 3. It is a question that comes unsought, but with much insistence: Why is it that chap. 2 has been placed between chaps. 1 and 3? What can it have to do with the story? We saw that chap. 3 presupposes that Hosea had different intentions with his unfaithful wife. Only by a definite divine revelation was he made to do an unheard-of thing: to love as God loves, in spite of unfaithfulness and sin. Now, Hosea must surely have told of his first intention to give point to the divine command in 3:1. May it not be that there are still some traces of Hosea's own story left in chap. 2, which have later on become obscured by being woven together with the story of Jahve and Israel?¹⁰

There are certain elements in chap. 2 which are recognized as not original (see especially W. R. Harper, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea*, 1905). These are vss. 4a β , 6, 12. The tone in these verses is more decisive; punishment is definitely announced; there is no longer the plea that she put away her unfaithfulness lest something terrible happen; the divorce is definitely and categorically announced. We should perhaps add to these verses vs. 7a, for just as little as vs. 6 is addressed to the children who are to strive with their mother (vs. 4), so little is vs. 7a addressed to them, for it speaks of "their mother," not, as vs. 4, of "your mother." If we now read these verses together, we have the following remarkable statement:

- 2: 4a β She is not my wife,
 And I am not her husband,
- 2: 6 And her children I do not pity,
 Because they are children of harlotry,
- 1: 7a For their mother has played the harlot,
 She that conceived them has done shamefully.

¹⁰ Marti tells us in his commentary on Hosea (p. 22) that Meinhold sees in 2:3 the remnant of a notice which was to connect chap. 1 with the address in 2:4 *sqq.*, and which contained the reference to Gomer's divorce. Meinhold thinks that vs. 3 read originally **וְאָמַרְתִּי לְבָנַי וְלִבְנוֹתַי**, "then said I to my sons Jezreel and Lo-'Ammi and my daughter Lo-Ruhamah . . ." Just how Meinhold works out his theory I do not know, since I have not seen his book. Marti declares that he overlooks that it is Jahve who speaks in 2:4 *sqq.*, so that vs. 3, as he restores it, would not be a good introduction to 2:4 *sqq.* Now, though Marti's criticism is sound, if Meinhold has indeed overlooked this, and though the restoration of 2:3 as given by him will hardly commend itself to general approval, his general theory that we have remnants of Hosea's story in chap. 2 is not thereby disproved, however much the specific working-out of his theory may be open to criticism.

2:12 And now will I uncover her shame
 Before the eyes of her lovers,
 And no man shall save her out of my hand.

These must be Hosea's own words, telling of his determination to do with his wife as was customary with adulteresses. The first sentence, "she is not my wife and I am not her husband," reminds one of the formulas, *ul mari atta; ul abi atta; ul muti atta*, which are the terms used in legal language, and from which we may perhaps venture to conclude that the old Israelitish formula of divorce was: "Thou art not my wife and I am not thy husband." He disowns not only his wife, but also his children, and calls them children of harlotry, unable in his anger to draw the line between the mother and the children; perhaps he does now think that they are probably not his own either. But not merely disowning and divorcing, but meting out full penalty, is Hosea's intention, vs. 12. Then Jahve intervenes; his special message comes: Do not cast her away, love her still!

Surely these verses describing so vividly Hosea's intentions must have belonged originally to his own story; they are not glosses of later readers or editors, but Hosea's own words which became interwoven with the words concerning Jahve's and Israel's relations. But why were they connected with just these words? Because the verses among which they stand correspond to this stage of Hosea's feelings. They are vss. 4*aab*, 5, 7*b*, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15.¹¹ Jahve asks the Israelites to see to it that the idolatry of the land cease; else he threatens drought and calamity. He uses the image of harlotry for idolatry. Israel has the sinful notion that the Baals have given fertility to the land. Jahve will show them by terrible experience that it was he who gave it and not they; he will lay the land waste and thus punish Israel for her nature-worship.

The rest of the chapter falls naturally into three sections: (1) vss. 8, 9; (2) vss. 16-19, 21, 22; (3) vss. 20, 23-25. The first two sections, which are parallel, speak of the efforts which Jahve will make to cause Israel to return to him. In the first he will make it impossible for her to have intercourse with her paramours, and in her despair she will turn to him again, with the conviction that it was better for her with her first husband, Jahve. In the second, Jahve will allure her into the wilderness, and there,

¹¹ 1:7; 2:1-3 are rightly regarded as later additions by practically everybody.

where they spent the time of their first love, will he woo for her love again, will he speak in winning tones to her heart; for the hope is ever fresh that she will return and be won again by him, and that the former intimate relations of love will be re-established. This leads naturally over to the material consequences of the restoration: marvelous fertility of the ground. This had been taken away by Jahve; wilderness and waste had come where fertility reigned because of Jahve's anger; but now wonderful fruitfulness of the land shall accompany the re-establishment of the true relationship of love between Jahve and Israel.

All three sections have been declared not to be original. But I think it will be seen at once that the first two fall in line with the story of Hosea's love in chap. 3. The hedging-in of Israel and her removal from all temptations to nature-worship, as well as the wooing and alluring by Jahve, correspond to Hosea's mode of treating Gomer in 3:3.¹² One is tempted to ask whether in Hosea's own story there was not also a more detailed reference to the wooing and alluring of his wife. It is not really necessary to

¹² Of the arguments against the Hosean authorship of 2:8, 9 which Dr. Harper gives on p. 236, the points that they break the connection between vss. 7 and 10, that they anticipate vs. 11, and that they differ in rhythm and strophic structure from their context, prove nothing else than that they are not in their right place. This is true. They are a fragment. But their Hosean authorship is by no means invalidated thereby. As to the assertion that they do not harmonize with 3:3, since here the "voluntary return of the woman is described, while there she is held in forcible restraint," we ask: What does vs. 8 mean, if not that she will be prevented from having intercourse with her lovers? Is this essentially different from 3:3 except in phraseology? And what else can be the possible meaning of the seclusion in 3:3 than that she may be won back again? We must not overlook that Hosea is *to love* her still; that he is therefore trying by all possible means to win her again; the punishment is not punitive but redemptive.

For the arguments against the genuineness of 2: 16, 17 compare Harper, *loc. cit.*, p. 238. (1) That they differ from the point of view expressed in vss. 11 *sqq.* is true, but it is to be remembered that the passages belong to two different periods in Hosea's preaching. (2) The different view in vs. 5 does not exclude the one in these verses. Hosea had both conceptions: (a) Jahve will take away all evidences of the supposed power of the nature-deities by turning the land into a wilderness; (b) when he tries to win back Israel, Hosea thinks of the wilderness period when Israel was faithful. Jahve will allure her thither and will try to woo for her love again under those favorable conditions when she is away from the Baals, her paramours. (3) 11:1 shows that the time of youth was a period of love. 12:4 refers to something else. Israel's present unfaithfulness has not always existed; there was a time when she was faithful. (4) It is true that the order of thought in vs. 17 is not Hosean, because for Hosea blessings could come only after repentance. The question presents itself: Shall we regard vs. 17a as not from Hosea, or as misplaced? It would be in its place after the section, and would be a good link between this section and the following; its genuineness depends on that of vss. 23 *sqq.* (5) It is certainly strange to regard the figure of allurements as a later phrase, and to refer to Ezekiel for it in a book that speaks so much of love. And, in regard to the valley of Achor, the reference is much more naturally to the time of the exodus, referred to here by "the wilderness," than to Isa. 65:10. The story of Achan and Achor must have been well known to Hosea. There Israel was purged from sin; the valley became a door of hope in consequence. (6) That the rhythm and strophic structure of these verses are different from the context simply shows that the verses do not go with vss. 4 *sqq.* This is true and has been assumed above. But it does not prove that the verses are not Hosean.

suppose that this was so, because 3:3 is sufficient. Though these sections furnish us with no remnants of Hosea's own story, they cast a light on it nevertheless: as Hosea's treatment of his wife symbolized and illustrated Jahve's treatment of Israel, so Jahve's methods of winning her back throw a light on Hosea's way of regaining his wife's love.

It is true that the third section which speaks of the wonderful fertility of the land has no corresponding point in Hosea's life. And yet it is very closely interwoven with the whole conception of Jahve's method: first the taking-away of the fertility in order to show that it is his gift not the Baalim's; then the restoration of the former relation of love which is most naturally crowned by Jahve's gift of wonderful fertility. Israel knows now Jahve and loves him, and Jahve naturally delights in giving her his choicest gifts.¹³

It is true that all three sections have their real place after chap. 3. They are, however, Hosean, standing in organic relation to Hosea's vital message. Hosea still believes that the exile will come, but the stern prophet of doom has become the prophet of love—a love that is faithful in spite of the wife's unfaithfulness; a love that punishes, but in order to redeem, to win back the old affection, to restore and to bless. Thus he is the prophet of hope—deathless hope, because he is the prophet of deathless love.

If we now attempt to sketch, on the basis of the results of our investigation, the story of Hosea's family life, we get the following:

Hosea is a prophet at the time of his marriage to Gomer bath Diblaim. He becomes in a real sense the prophet that he was to be by his marriage and its results. He names his three children by symbolical names. His family is to symbolize the relation of Jahve to Israel, at first only in the names of the children which

¹³ The only real argument brought forward by Harper, p. 244, against the genuineness of these verses would be that the materialistic blessings are not in keeping with the spirit of the teaching of Hosea, if it could be proved that the contemplation of the full restoration of Israel to Jahve's favor is not Hosean. But this is impossible in the light of chap. 3, where the hope of full restoration is implied in the continued love in spite of unfaithfulness. It is difficult to see how Hosea, who announced as punishment the turning of the land into a wilderness, and who sees in this fact the sign of the overthrow of the Baal-power, believing that the people must come to understand that it is no one but Jahve who gives them corn and wine and flax and oil and all material blessings, could fail to promise for the time of re-established love marvelous fertility and wonderful material blessings.

Of course, it is impossible to assert that vs. 20, which belongs to this section, must be original if vss. 23-25 are original. The idea of universal peace is usually regarded as belonging to later times; but if Isa. 2:4 should, after all, belong to Isaiah (or his contemporary Micah), we could not well deny this verse 20 to Hosea.

If vs. 17a, which links this section with vss. 16 *sqq.*, is placed before vss. 20, 23-25, we have no really valid argument against its genuineness.

are to be perpetual sermons to Israel. Not yet does Hosea know that his whole family life is to be a symbol of Jahve's and Israel's relation. After the birth of his third child he discovers that his wife is unfaithful. He decides to divorce her and to disown her children. As a prophet he has spoken of the casting-away of Israel by Jahve for the same reason: faithlessness. He sees in this unfaithfulness of his wife the symbol of Israel's unfaithfulness and believes that Jahve will also cast Israel away. But then comes Jahve's revelation commanding him not to divorce her, but to love her still. And as the reason for this unheard-of command Jahve declares that he also loves unfaithful Israel still. Such a love is more than human; but Jahve is God and not man. He cannot bear to cast Israel away forever (*cf.* also 11:8 *sqq.*). And with this command Jahve gives Hosea also instruction as to the mode of treatment for his wife. She shall be shut off from her lover, and Hosea is to be kind to her. Thus will Jahve also proceed with Israel. The exile comes, but through it the glad days of early love shall be restored.

The principal points on which this reconstruction depends may be summarized as follows:

1. We have the story of Hosea's marriage only in fragmentary form, and not entirely in Hosea's own words; chap. 3 is by himself, chap. 1 by a disciple.

2. 1:2*b* does not go back to Hosea, but is a later addition.

3. 3:1 עיר should be translated, "*Still* go and love a woman, who loves another and is an adulteress."

4. 3:2 is not in its right place; it belongs to Hosea's own story, where it stood after the point narrated in 1:2.

5. 3:3 וגם אני אלך should be translated, "yet I on my part am thine."

6. 2:4*a* β , 6, 7*a*, 12 are remnants of Hosea's own story, telling of his intention to divorce his wife and disown his children, and punish the adulteress with terrible severity, which, indeed, is presupposed by the divine intervention in 3:1.

7. 2:8, 9; 2:16, 17*b*, 21, 22; 2:17*a* (20), 23–25 are Hosean, but belong really after chap. 3.